

# An Interview with Dean Christensen

Art Lage & Bruce Roningen

The present curriculum change for the College of Veterinary Medicine is now a reality after years of planning and the efforts of many individuals.

In December of 1962, Dr. George C. Christensen accepted the position of Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University. In January of 1963, a curriculum evaluation committee was established by the faculty. This committee met with Dean Christensen to discuss his ideas on veterinary medical education.

A delegation was sent to the University of Iowa to study their educational methods because of their unique systems of education and teaching.

During the spring, the evaluation committee was asked to formulate a basic philosophy of curriculum and to suggest a curriculum in veterinary medicine that would most effectively accomplish the objectives of our college.

On July 1, 1963, Dean Christensen officially began his term as Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine. After meeting with the curriculum committee, it was decided to send 16 people to the Symposium on Veterinary Curricula at Michigan State University. People were also sent to

the Veterinary Curricula Symposium at Georgia University in June of 1964.

Shortly after this, the curriculum evaluation committee met again and discussed their views. New ideas were presented that had been formulated by attending the curricula symposiums. They decided to have each department in the College of Veterinary Medicine submit an outline of each course offered. Included in these course outlines were components, course coverage, instructors, number of times the classes met, and labs offered.

In March of 1964, a questionnaire was mailed to 2,126 veterinarians. The mailing went to the veterinary graduates of Iowa State University and members of the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association who were not Iowa State graduates. Approximately 50% of the questionnaires were returned by September. Some time was necessary to code the responses received on the questionnaire and finally a statistical analysis was made of the results. A curriculum questionnaire committee was set up with the task of summarizing the results of the questionnaire.

The committee then set up interviews with the department heads and senior instructors in each of the departments. These interviews were very frank and tape recordings were made of all remarks. These

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remarks could later be studied by the curriculum committee. These interviews were intended to find out how each course fitted into the philosophy of veterinary education. The curriculum committee was delighted to find the faculty members to be responsive and open-minded in these interviews. It was the frankness and responsiveness that made a true evaluation of the present curriculum possible, and for the committee to understand the need for a change in the present curriculum.

Sample curricula were then constructed by the various department heads and sent to the curriculum committee to be reviewed. The committee looked for duplication in courses and decided when and where some duplication was needed. After reviewing these changes, a new curriculum was drafted.

It is believed that this new curriculum will educate future veterinarians so that they may contribute more to their profession.

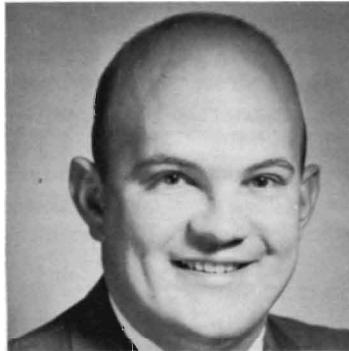
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